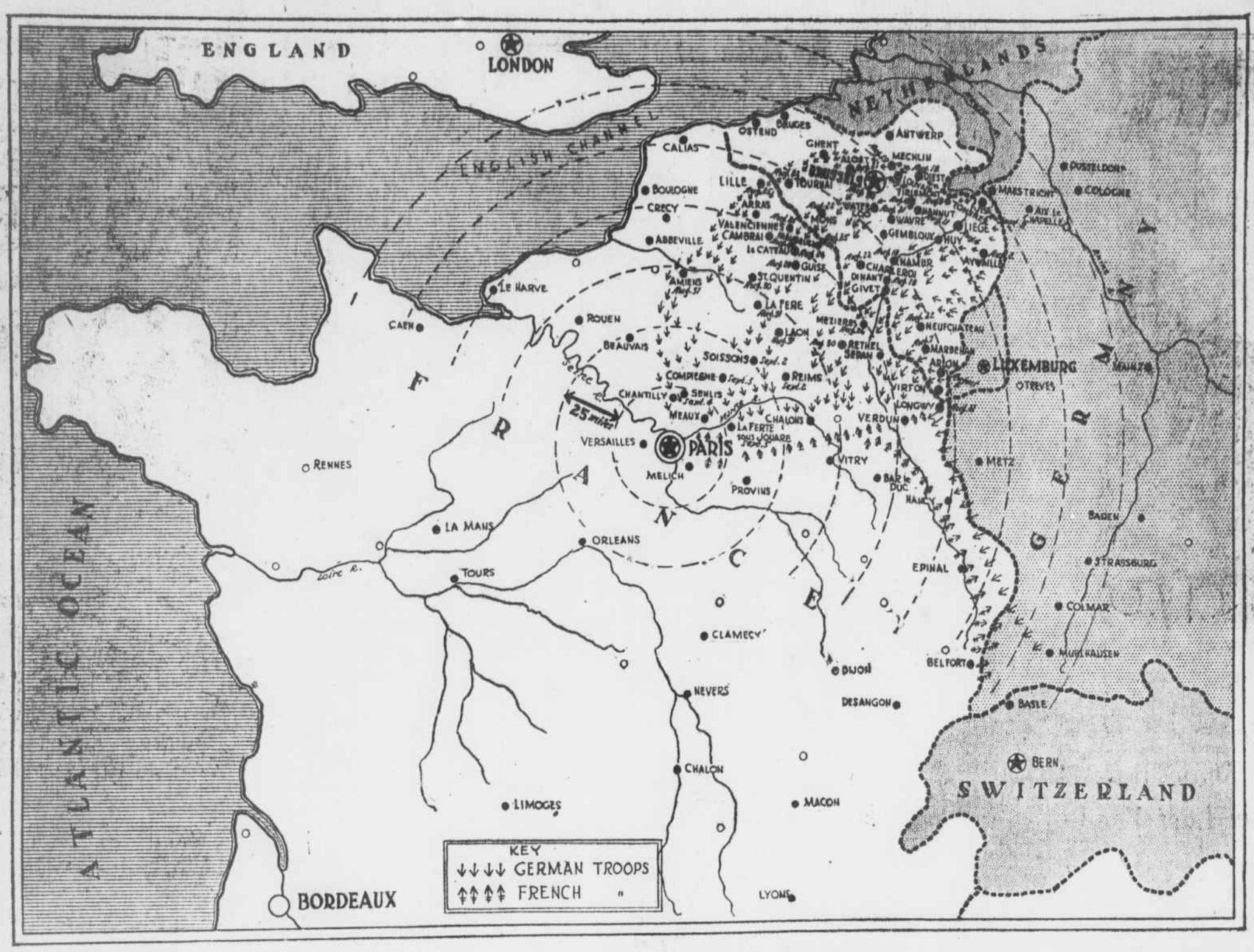
WONDERFUL GERMAN ADVANCE ON PARIS IS A WAR CAMEO

Movement of Kaiser's Forces Stands Out Now in Military Annals.

The Present Situation and the Steps Which Have Led to It Reviewed.



WITHIN an incredibly short time after August 1, when Germany declared war against Russia, the Kaiser had an army of a million men or more pressing against the Belgian, Luxemburg and French borders, from Aix-la-Chapelle, on the north, to Muelhausen, in the south. One glance at the map will show that these borders form a line running roughly north and south, with the fortresses of Metz and Verdun frowning at each other just halfway down. As far north as Verdun the French soon had an army facing the Kaiser's. Above this point the Belgians hastily interposed their resistance to the advance of the Germans, to withdraw later in favor of the French and English.

To understand the remarkable German advance on Paris one should keep in mind this simple initial line of troops, and then remember that the French are still in Verdun and are still holding their original line along the German border to the south. To the north of Verdun, however, the Germans have pressed them and their allies back until Verdun forms the apex of an acute angle. To do this the extreme German right has described an arc through Brussels and Amiens to within twenty-five miles of Paris, of a total distance of at least 260 miles, and they have done it in a month. In other words, this great mass of men have moved forward on an average of between seven and eight miles a day, fighting every step of the way, military achievement unparalleled in human history.

The German advance on Paris may be considered to have passed into history, since the war seems to have taken on a new phase within the last few days. It is with this advance alone that we are concerned here.

On August 2, the very day after the declaration of war, the German advance guard had occupied Visé, in the north of Belgium, twelve miles from the German border, near Aix-la-Chapelle, and had penetrated Luxemburg in the south as far as Arlon, on the Belgian frontier, twenty-five miles from the German border. On August 5 a sufficient force had appeared before Liège, eighteen miles from the border, to demand the surrender of its forts. Other Belgian towns on a direct line south reported the presence of German troops, showing that from one end to the other of the Belgian frontier the German army had crossed the boundary in force on the night of August 3-4.

In view of this mass movement, how insignificant now seems the temporary check to a single army corps at Liège! On August 9, in spite of the heroic resistance of the Liégeois, we find the Germans in Tongres, ten and a half miles northwest of Visé and about fifteen miles northwest of Liège, spreading out over Northern Belgium like a visitation. On August 11 they had penetrated as far as Hannut, seventeen miles northwest of Liège, though the Liège forts still opposed their progress, and in the south they had reached Virton, fifteen miles further on than Arlon.

The next day cavalry engagements between Uhlans and Belgians took place on a line between Tirlemont and Diest, twenty-two miles from Tongres. The same day Germans were reported at Huy, fifteen miles southwest of Liège. Reference to the map will show that already the extreme right was moving faster than the right centre, the whole right half pivoting before Verdun and swinging southward.

The first battle line of importance extended from Diest in the north south-southeast through Tirlemont, Namur and Dinant. The fact that the opposing Belgian army was utterly powerless to check the German army here is proved by the announcement next day that the Germans had entered Louvain, twelve miles west of this battle line, the right end of their line swinging as far west as Malines. On August 20 the invaders occupied Brussels, thirteen miles west-southwest of Louvain.

With the defeat on the Diest-Tirlemont line and the German occupation of Louvain and Brussels the plucky little Belgian army withdrew from the direct path of the Kaiser's hosts, retreating northwest on Antwerp. The Germans detached a small contingent to look after them and prevent attacks on the rear of their main army, but did not pause on their southward swing. If their advance to this point may be considered rapid the territory they covered in the next few days must be considered little short of phenomenal.

The explanation is made that the Belgians were obliged to retreat so rapidly they did not have time to destroy the railroads and bridges leading south from Brussels and Alost. Two other factors contributed to this sudden jump, moonlight nights and the absence of any immediately opposing army. The dispatches, it will be remembered, said at the time that the advancing British and French armies had chosen a line of defence and were waiting for their German enemies.

They all met on a battle line two days later running from Mons, on the west, which is thirty-two miles south of Brussels, to Namur, which had not yet fallen, and then southeast through Dinant and Givet. To the surprise of all observers, strongly fortified Namur suddenly collapsed before the German pressure, and the British troops, occupying the extreme left of the allies' line, found themselves in imminent danger of being outflanked, since the German line extended to the west of Mons, the British base, as far as Tournai. Fighting desperately, the British and French fell back over the border to Maubeuge and Valenciennes, twelve miles further south. And these towns they evacuated in a hurry on August 25, making another stand on the line between Cambrai, Le Cateau and Mezieres, from eleven to fifteen miles below, on August 26. In the meantime the Germans had also passed through Lille, some distance to the left, still trying hard to outflank the extreme left of the allies, occupied by the British.

This flanking movement gave the allies all they could do to retreat fast enough to maintain their forces intact. Indeed, their feat in successfully retreating at the marvellous rate maintained by the German advance is an achievement second only to that of the Kaiser's troops. On August 30 they paused along the line between St. Quentin and Rethel, only to fall back twelve miles the next day on the fortifications of La Fere and Laon.

But not even with the help of these could they effectually check their pursuers. On September 2 we find the battle line between Soissons and Reims, fifteen miles nearer Paris, and then in the wood at Compeigne and at Senlis, only twenty-seven miles from the French capital. From this point the allies settled back on the outer fortifications of Paris, only to see the enemy suddenly swerve to the east, as if to pass the gay city by. It is this manœuvre which is now puzzling everybody but the strategists on the spot. Having arrived before the gates of Paris after record-breaking progress and tremendous sacrifices the invaders dodge her—why?

More than one expert has made this answer: Because the Germans have been unable to make any lasting impression on the French and British army or armies. Although they have hammered with all the strength of the greatest military machine in history they have done nothing more than simply to bend the allied line. And while they have been growing weaker, getting further from their bases and losing men in great numbers, the allies have been approaching their bases and gaining always from the tardier French mobilization.

We learn now that the allies are beginning to push the Germans back to the east of Paris. Is this the end, then, of their marvellous advance? Will their armies snap back now into their original position, like an overstretched elastic, and assume the defensive, or with one supreme effort will they break the allies' line near its right centre, where they are now concentrating their attack, and thereby crown their tremendous march with victory?

It remains only to specify the German armies and their commanders who have been accomplishing this historic advance. On the extreme right marched the first army, consisting of the 7th, 9th and 10th corps, under General von Kluk. Next to them marched the second army, comprising the 11th, 4th and 6th corps, under General von Buelow; then the third army, operating largely in Belgian Luxemburg, made up of the guards and of the 12th and 19th corps, and finally the fourth army, at the pivotal point in the Duchy of Luxemburg, comprising the 8th, 16th and 18th corps, with the 3d and 6th cavalry divisions, under the Grand Duke of Würtemberg.

One can appreciate the overwhelming strength of this right wing of the German forces when he understands that for the entire line in Alsace-Lorraine, from Metz south to Switzerland, there are only two armies, one under Crown Prince Friedrich and the other under Prince Rupprecht of Bavaria.

FOLLOWING THE WAR IN RHYME AND PICTURE

VERSES BY A. R. FERGUSON.

DRAWINGS BY C. R. WEED.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 3.

They're waiting for the German right
In Paris with a load of lead,
While Amiens gives up the fight
And airmen battle overhead.
To stay beside the Seine is risky,
So Prexy seeks the Bay of Biscay.

FRIDAY.

For seven days the Russians fought,
And Petrograd lets loose a shout
At Grand Duke Nicholas's report
That Austria's retreat's a rout.
Lord Kitchener to each recruit
Says, "Hang manœuvres; learn to shoot!"

SATURDAY.

At last the German rush is halted;
Their right retires on St. Quentin.
Around Verdun and in Lorraine
The French report a partial gain.

Not far from Ghent a skirmish rages,
Where Belgians still the foe defy;
And Asquith England's grief assuages,
Declaring she must win or die.
Through rumors contradictory,
Berlin yet hopes for victory.

Rheims falls before Von Buelow's forces,
Although their general is dead.
It seems the Kaiser's latest course is
To turn the allies' flank instead.
The movies, magazines and beer
Will help to raise a war tax here.

While German reinforcements gather
To meet the Czar's victorious arms,
Franz Joseph reckons he would rather
Have left the Cossacks on their farms.
The fix the Austrians are in
Leaves Russia free to pound Berlin.

SUNDAY.

The Kaiser leads his own attack
On Nancy, while his army's right
From Lille is falling quickly back
Toward Antwerp, which expects a fight.
And Amiens the Germans fine
Two million francs, cigars and wine.

A year's supplies and guns in masses,
When Lemberg fell, were left behind.
Across the high Carpathian passes
The Russian columns slowly wind.
McCutcheon, Cobb et al. declare
The German cruelties hot air.

MONDAY

East from the Seine the Allies' beacons
A hundred miles and twenty dance,
And while the Kaiser's column weakens,
The English bugles sound advance.
A submarine, as England gapes,
Raids Bremerhaven and escapes.

Dinant repeats Louvain's destruction,
And Germany's Imperial Guard
Submits to serious reduction
Where Tommy Atkins presses hard.
"Wilhelm the Greatest" is the name
By which the Kaiser's known to fame.

TUESDAY.

Along the Ourcq the French are massing,
Prepared to cook the Teuton goose,
And, fearing lest their gain is passing,
The hard pressed Germans ask a truce.
To which the Allies make reply:
'Leave France within a day or die!'

Franz Josef may again be dying,
Or else he died twelve days ago;
And Italy is still replying
To Germany's persuasion, "No!"
If England wins, she thinks the Kaiser
May settle by a Western geyser.

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 9.

The Czar lays Rawaruska low;
By him Galicia now is bossed.
He swears Berlin will see him, though
His final Moujik be the cost.
Maubeuge at last capitulates,
But quick delivery awaits.

Off Scotland sinks the Oceanic.
The Turk prepares to fight with Greece;
While Austria, in half a panic,
Is likely soon to sue for peace.
And Loti, though he's sixty-four,
Insists he'd like to go to war

CABLE DISPATCHES FAIL TO TELL JUST WHAT PARIS IS LIKE AT THE PRESENT TIME

PARIS in war times! What is it doing? What is it not doing? How does it look? What is it like, if anything?

The cable has answered some of those questions already. It has told us, at considerable cents a word, that the soldiers kissed their wives and sweethearts goodby when they left for the front. That was interesting, but not entirely unexpected. It has told us there is no night life, which is equally interesting, albeit less expected. And it has gone into details about a number of things that were neither interesting nor expected.

But when it came to the real issues the cable failed sadly. It has circled around the vital questions, here and there suggesting, rather than stating, the answers to them. If there is no night life, for example, what has become of those who helped to make that night life what it was? If the tourists have ceased touring, as the cables insist, then where is that sixty per cent of the Parisian population that garnered a living from said tourists? And on what are they subsisting?

The old stagers like to tell you that the tourist never sees the real Paris, but that is one of the vagaries of the old stager. The truth is that Paris without the tourist is not Paris. It needs him in quantities, and it gets him just that way—playfully casting his francs and his five-francs and his ten-francs right and left, and being welcomed, and made a fuss over, and swindled, left and right.

So, given a touristless Paris, we rise to make inquiries concerning the million or so of persons thus thrown automatically out of employment. The guides, for example—those thousands of creatures who lie in wait for one at the Place de l'Opera, vaunting their excellence as personal conductors, clutching at your sleeve when you try to tell them no; urging, insisting and pressing—what are they doing these war days?

We will say that Jacques Fournier, who is a high pressure guide of thirty years' experience, has enlisted in the French army. After all, that is perhaps what most of the guides have done—probably the whole 600,000 of them. Nominally they have changed their vocations, but only nominally. The habit has fixed itself upon them too firmly to be shaken off in a moment—they have been guides and guides they will remain. Just as they piloted the tourist through the devious ways of the Latin Quarter—which are more devious than they are Latin—so they are now steering, or trying to steer, the French army.

As General Jardiniere makes his nightly inspection of the camp we find Jacques Fournier sighting him afar off, rushing from his tent to meet him. There are eighteen or twenty men in the inspecting party perhaps, but Jacques advances unhesitatingly and picks out the general. Five thousand times he has picked the lone American out of a crowd of a hundred Frenchmen, so spotting the general is easy.

He lays an arm on the general's left epaulet and throws the other—arm, not epaulet—around his waist. He has found this hold efficacious in persuading a prospective customer to stop and listen.

"Would you like to see the Germans this evening?" he insinuates.

"Huh?" asks the general.

"There are some very fine Germans not far from here. I would be pleased to conduct you to them. Very cheap, sir; very cheap."

"Er—er—what's that? How much?"

"How many in the party, sir?"

"Why, let's see. About four hundred thousand, I guess."

"Special rates to large parties, sir. A franc for each person. Stay with you all evening, sir; show you all the points of interest. Lille? Longwy? Yes, sir. No extra charge for battles, sir."

And so on. The French guide is earning his living at the front—of that you may be sure. He will win, whate'er betide.

When it comes to the picture postcard venders the situation is exactly the same. You read, perhaps, of the German army's march into Brussels—how they established their camp in a few minutes and in an hour were mailing souvenir postcards back to their families.

The story did not tell who sold them the postcards, but it is no secret. The Parisian postcarders were there—twenty minutes ahead of the Germans and waiting for them, like as not.

PICTURES AT MUSEUM.

Just now, when the German advance toward Paris is occupying the headlines, the public and about everything else, the Franco-Prussian war pictures at the Metropolitan Museum are attracting a lot of attention. The Morgan collection has not been totally eclipsed, to be sure; neither is the Altman bequest entirely neglected. But it's a mighty dull moment, say the attendants, when there isn't an interested group studying these reminders of the last great European war.

The picture which attracts the most attention is "The Defence of Champigny," by Detaille. It shows the French infantry taking up a position behind the walls of a country villa. Engineers are at work making loop-holes and strengthening the gate with bedding and furniture from the nearby chateau.

Another war picture, "Friedland, 1807," represents Napoleon reviewing his victorious army. The huzzaing cuirassiers, brandishing their swords on high, gallop past the conqueror in much the same manner as the Kaiser, it is said, would like to have his troops gallop past him.